

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 19, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The electrochemical performance of the MEA and fuel cell in some cases may be enhanced by impregnation of the membrane with another ionically conducting polymeric phase in order to extend the volume of the 3-dimensional electrochemically active zone or to improve the surface or bonding properties of the membrane in the MEA preparation. This impregnation can be carried out by means known in the art such as spraying or dipping the membrane with a solution of an ionically conducting polymer such as the Nafion® polymer or other perfluorinated, partially fluorinated, or non-fluorinated ionomers. After the impregnation process is complete, the ~~electrode~~ membrane may be dried at elevated temperatures, typically 100 to 140 °C in the case of Nafion® polymer, in order to remove residual solvent and to transform the ionomer into the form of an insoluble solid. --